



## **Clean Energy Future Committee**

Date: May 26, 2023

Time: 8:15 – 9:30 a.m.

Hybrid Remote/In-Person Meeting

### **Minutes**

#### **Attendance:**

- Members Remote: Eric Helmuth, James DiTullio, Marc Breslow, Pasi Miettinen, Ryan Katofsky (as Chair), Shelly Dein
- Members In Person: David Morgan, John Alessi, Nellie Aikenhead, Talia Fox
- Members Absent: Amos Meeks, Jim Feeney
- Also attending: Gene Benson, Patrick Hanlon, Aimee Graeber

R. Katofsky convened the meeting at 8:15 am.

#### **1. Hybrid Meeting Reminders and Roll Call and Welcome**

- If there is a technical failure, we will try to relaunch the meeting three times.
- If we are unable to relaunch and there are more than 20 minutes left in the meeting, the CEFC will reconvene the following Friday.
- If there are fewer than 20 minutes left, the CEFC will carry the remaining agenda items forward to the next meeting.
- Welcome to Aimee Graeber, the new soon-to-be-appointed member of the CEFC. Aimee moved to Arlington last year, is enthusiastic about sustainability, and works for the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation preparing resource management plans.

#### **2. Review and Approve 4/28/2023 Meeting Minutes**

- CEFC reviewed the draft minutes from the April 28, 2023, meeting. S. Dein moved to approve and D. Morgan seconded. CEFC approved with a show of hands; E. Helmuth abstained.

#### **3. Fossil Fuel Demonstration Pilot Updates**

##### **T. Fox**

- Department of Energy Resources (DOER) released the final regs for the Fossil Fuel Free (FFF) Pilot program and filed them for approval with the Joint Committee for Telecommunications, Utilities and Energy on May 10th. The regulations are still in draft format, but the Town doesn't expect them to change, so T. Fox is proceeding with preparation of an application.

- Arlington requested and received clarifications around timing and eligibility. The revised regulations clarify that an application to the FFF Pilot is due 9/1/2023, and a separate letter of intent no longer needed. To be eligible, Arlington still needs to introduce a multi-family zoning ordinance that complies with the MBTA Communities requirements, and we need to revise our FFF bylaw; both should happen at Fall Special Town Meeting. The Town must also provide an implementation plan, which shows how we will meet these requirements by the 2/11/24 statutory deadline.
- We received clarification that it is ok to modify the DOER Model Rule, provided we don't conflict w the statute requirements. We have to decide if we will modify our existing bylaw (most likely), draft a new one, or use the model; we are discussing this with Town Counsel.

**P. Hanlon:**

- Definition of "substantial renovation" has changed in the regs: now includes additions over 1,000 sq ft, rather than only new construction. This will increase the number of dwellings that the law applies to and has the possibility to affect homeowner renovations as opposed to mostly developer new builds. We will need to decide if Arlington will also adopt this language.
- Side note: In Arlington, a special permit is required for additions over 750 sq ft; which is often times just making a small house bigger.
- As part of the pilot program, DOER is requiring that certain information and data be submitted by participants. Many municipalities may not currently be collecting this data or may not collect it in the right format; participants will need to review and tweak their data collection in order to be able to provide meaningful information.

**S. Dein:** there is a push to expand the pilot to more than 10 communities. It's great that Arlington is a leader in this effort and on the list, but there are other communities, including Boston, Somerville, Northampton and others, that do a lot more new development and have been relegated to the wait list.

#### **4. Sustainability Updates**

**A. MBTA Communities**

- T. Fox: Jennifer Susse presented at the last CEFC meeting and there are many more opportunities to learn and participate in the future zoning overlay district. Currently, there is a push to gather information from the public. There will be a public meeting on the topic on June 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 community center meeting room. Getting the zoning overlay district passed should be a top priority of the CEFC: it meets objectives of NZAP (dense communities around transit are green) and is mandatory for the FFF pilot.

**B. Electrify Arlington**

- Had a couple of successful events during EcoFest. Including "Electrify Your Home, Plan Ahead" through Arlington Community Education, which about 40 people attended and "Electrify Arlington" at the library, which 30-40 people attended. Electrify Arlington will be at the Farmers Market once a month this summer and at the June Arlington Heights Festival. Volunteers are needed to staff the tables.
- Have started an RFP process for a home performance contractor so we have a single company in for all the home energy assessments in town, and we are

hiring energy advocate part-time to help support that program. Funded through MassSave grant.

#### C. Electric Vehicles

- We have 2 electric busses but are still waiting for equipment to get the charging stations up and running; hoping to do a ribbon cutting event in the fall. We also got a small META grant to do a fleet transition plan to become all electric, which is one of the action plans in our NZAP.
- Discussion about police vehicles: the police department is currently exclusively buying hybrids. Purchasing and siting the infrastructure for an all-electric fleet is the holdback, along with concerns over cost effectiveness. Another concern is that police vehicles are often on the road 24 hours a day, so would need to have super fast chargers or to expand the fleet so there is downtime for charging.
- Grid capacity seems to be sufficient in Arlington for now, but greater capacity may be needed as we ramp up use. P. Miettinen commented that Eversource did a thorough mapping of all the transformers and that information will likely be helpful if we need to expand. In terms of capacity for the larger region, R. Katofsky mentioned a primary concern is the need for fast chargers in the major transportation corridors. We are likely to see more large load demand locations being anticipated in advance, rather than waiting until the locations are requested. And electricity storage options will likely be developed in those large load locations, so we aren't limited to pulling power from the grid. These types of things are getting more and more attention from policy makers and regulators.

#### D. Gas Leaks

- On June 9<sup>th</sup>, there will be a gas leaks safari with town and state leadership, decision makers, officials and interested parties to raise the profile of this issue. Nine tested gas leaks will be visited in total, of which two are repairs that went awry and two are grade 2 (more hazardous) leaks. One example is the Russell St leak which has been going on for 10+ years. Neighborhood residents have expressed interest in learning more about geothermal alternatives, so that might be a good location for educational outreach and possibly a site for a pilot project.
- P. Miettinen reminded the CEFC about water line breaks and sewer backups that are associated with gas pipeline replacement.

### 5. NZAP Working Groups

- At the April meeting, the CEFC discussed creating three working groups: transportation, clean energy supply, and buildings.
- J. Alessi will head the transportation group, S. Dein will participate. R. Katofsky will head the clean energy supply group, which includes gas leaks; D. Morgan will participate. And M. Breslow, P. Miettinen, and A. Meeks volunteered for the buildings group; a leader is still needed.
- The expectation is that the head of each group will 1) make sure the CEFC is properly plugged in and engaged with related efforts around town and 2) organize group meetings to prioritize NZAP items and report back to CEFC.

### 6. Next Meeting Date June 23, 2023 [subsequently moved to June 30]– hybrid

- M. Breslow moved to end the meeting and P. Miettinen seconded. Unanimous vote by show of hands; meeting adjourned at 9:12am.  
Submitted by Nellie Aikenhead